

Abbreviated Articles

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Washington Post, Aaron C. Davis, Andrew Ba Tran, and Dalton Bennett, 15 February 2022

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Canada eyeing ‘no-go’ zones in Ottawa to quell ‘Freedom Convoy’ protests, official says

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Behind the Fractious Collaboration Steering the Canada Protests

New York Times, Sarah Maslin Nir and Natalie Kitroeff, 15 February 2022

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‘Freedom Convoy’ Protesters in Canada’s Capital City Dig In After Tougher Measures

Wall Street Journal, Paul Vieira and Kim Mackrael, 15 February 2022

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Residents in wealthy enclaves across the United States — from Beverly Hills, Calif., to suburbs of Austin, to Florida beach communities — sent millions of dollars to support trucker convoys that occupied the Canadian capital and shut down commerce at key border crossings between the two nations, according to a Washington Post analysis of leaked fundraising data posted online over the past 48 hours.

The richer an American community was, the more likely residents there were to donate, and the biggest number of contributions often came from communities where registered Republicans made up solid majorities, according to the review of more than 55,000 U.S.-based donations through the Christian fundraising website GiveSendGo. The site, which had suffered multiple security breaches over the past year, emerged as a fundraising magnet early this month after the better-known online fundraising

platform, GoFundMe, stopped accepting donations for the convoy. GoFundMe pulled away after saying the occupation born out of opposition to vaccine requirements for truckers violated its policies.

Hackers began to extract the information about donors to the controversial protest shortly after the Super Bowl began Sunday evening, the site's co-founder Jacob Wells told The Post in an interview. Someone posing as a donor was able to make changes that gave the intruder administrative powers. The hack did not necessarily reveal donors' identities, he said, because users are not required to give a real name or authentic email address to send money. But the site requires a donor to supply a zip code when making a credit card transaction to guard against fraud, Wells said, thereby revealing the locations of nearly all U.S. contributors.

"It's true, this was a campaign funded almost entirely by Canadians and Americans," Wells said. "And it's not over, we're pursuing every legal means to continue to get the money where donors intend it to go."

At the request of Canadian authorities, the Ontario Superior Court of Justice issued an order Thursday halting the distribution of money from GiveSendGo fundraisers, which were organized under the names "Freedom Convoy 2022" and "Adopt-a-Trucker."

The hacked data from the Freedom Convoy campaign was shared Monday by the nonprofit leak publisher Distributed Denial of Secrets, which provided the data to journalists and researchers. The group released a second set of data Tuesday showing contributions to the "Adopt-a-Trucker" campaign.

Combined, the two data sets contained 100,316 donations totaling \$8,961,973. Nearly 52 percent of the money came from residents in Canada. Almost 42 percent — and the largest overall number of contributions — came from the United States.

"I am not surprised at the slightest in regard to this information being leaked," Elena Danielson, a Beverly Hills real estate agent, wrote in an email to The Post when asked about leaked data showing a \$100 donation associated with her name and an email address related to her company.

In a series of emails, Danielson, 57, said she grew up in the Soviet Union, emigrated to Canada in the 1990s and then moved to the United States, where she is married and has grandchildren. Danielson, a Canadian American, said she was vaccinated when it became a condition for international travel but now is ashamed of what she sees as draconian mandates in her adopted nation to the north.

"I support the vaccine. I am glad that everyone who needed or wanted it is vaccinated. But now we all know that the vaccination status does not prevent from getting it again or spreading covid. My husband just had it for the second time after getting a booster," Danielson said, adding: "If [Canadian Prime Minister] Justin Trudeau was a true leader, he would admit to being wrong and lift the useless mandates."

Similarly, Nancy Vasa of eastern Oregon donated to the Freedom Convoy, sending \$2,000 through GiveSendGo on Feb. 5. In a place to add a note with the contribution, the 62-year-old Vasa wrote that she sees the danger to liberty closer to home: "May God bless our truckers for saving our freedom!"

Asked about the donation and the message that accompanied it, Vasa wrote in an email to The Post: "I believe that we are falling off the cliff to communism and the people rising up could be our last chance to get Americans to fight for our freedoms." A registered Republican who became active in politics during the Trump presidency, Vasa added that she believes "the vaccine mandates are part of a mass murder by Big Pharma."

Not all contributions from the United States were made by Republicans, according to leaked data that The Post compared with public records and voter registration data.

Nearly a third of the donations came from zip codes where Democrats outnumber Republicans, according to voter registration records. In Brooklyn The Post sent emails to an actor and a retired pastor who are registered Democrats and whose names and email addresses appeared to be associated with donations

to the convoy campaigns. An active member of the Green Party there also appeared to give \$50. None of the three returned emails seeking comment.

One donation of \$50 to the Freedom Convoy campaign used an email address associated with the Delaware Transit Corp. The payment made on Feb. 9 under the name of the state transit agency's chief operating officer, Richard Paprocka, included the message "God Bless you all, need your spirit here in the US!"

An official from the Delaware Transit Corp. and a spokesperson for Gov. John Carney (D) declined to comment when contacted by The Post. Paprocka did not respond to a request for comment sent to the email listed in the donation.

Across the South, contributions were often clustered, such as in the beach communities of Fernandina Beach and Amelia Island. There, a \$350 donation appeared associated with the name and email address for George Leing, a former top lawyer in the Commerce Department under President Donald Trump. He did not respond to an email, and there was no answer at a phone number listed for him.

Within a couple mile radius, 28 others donated, many \$100 or more. Dozens of contributions also flowed from Green Cove Springs, a community south of Jacksonville. Florida overall had the third-highest number of contributors and total donations.

Rebecca Walser confirmed she donated \$5,000 on Feb. 6 to the Freedom Convoy fundraising campaign using a Tampa Bay-area zip code for the payment. "I'm anti-mandate libertarian," Walser told The Post in a brief email.

Two of the biggest pockets of donors nationwide were centered to the north in Marietta and Roswell, Ga. To the west, Leander, Tex., a suburb north of Austin, had the highest number of overall donations with 38 individual contributors. Many included references to Bible verses in notes explaining their donations. A shop owner there declined to comment on a \$100 donation when reached by The Post.

Only a handful of contributors gave more than \$10,000 apiece.

Most were Canadian and defended their decisions in emails to The Post, calling the protest historic and fundamental to Canadians' rights to free speech.

The largest single contributor to the convoy from the United States appears to have been Thomas Siebel, who made a fortune in software development in Silicon Valley in the 1990s. A donation of \$90,000 was made in Siebel's name and using an email address associated with his past business, Siebel Systems.

The donation was not marked anonymous, and was published last week by supporters of the truckers. Siebel did not return an email seeking comment, nor did he return an email and message left with his assistant.

Canadian truck drivers distance themselves from 'Freedom Convoy' protests

Washington Post, Claire Parker, 16 February 2022

In just a matter of weeks, Canadian truck drivers protesting coronavirus vaccine mandates became the unexpected darlings of the global right wing.

Republican politicians showered the truckers, who descended on the Canadian capital, with praise. Copycat convoys gathered from New Zealand to France.

The protests against U.S. and Canadian regulations barring unvaccinated truck drivers from crossing the border began Jan. 28 — and soon attracted a range of anti-government activists, far-right figures and opponents of pandemic restrictions more broadly

But even as the vocal group of truckers, known as the “Freedom Convoy,” grabbed the world’s attention, many of Canada’s truck drivers were scrambling to distance themselves from the movement, which they view as radical and fringe.

In their view, the protesters’ actions — including shutting down cross-border trade and laying siege to the capital — have hurt rather than helped drivers in the industry, and failed to advance the labor issues most truckers care about. They point out that only a small percentage of Canadian truckers have joined the demonstrations, and the vast majority of drivers are already vaccinated, according to trucking associations and Canadian authorities.

“There is a vocal minority, which is trying to steal the headlines, but a silent majority has actually been working day and night,” said Manan Gupta, publisher of Road Today, a Canadian magazine for South Asian truckers. About a third of Canada’s roughly 180,000 tractor-trailer drivers are immigrants, according to the most recent survey, in 2016.

The protests have caused long delays at the border and forced drivers to take lengthy detours. Such disruptions are “not received well” by truckers who are not participating in the convoy, Gupta said, adding that “they are the ones keeping our supply chain intact and running.”

“These illegal blockades have had a detrimental impact on our members and customers’ businesses. These have also had a very significant negative impact upon our professional driving community,” the president of the Canadian Trucking Alliance, Stephen Laskowski, said in a statement Monday.

The roadblocks hampered trade with the United States and forced American auto companies to scale back production, prompting the White House to call last week for the swift reopening of transportation routes.

Canadian police cleared the blockade of the Ambassador Bridge, a vital border crossing linking Detroit to Windsor, Ontario, on Sunday night. And on Monday, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau invoked the country’s Emergencies Act, which grants the government sweeping powers to respond to national emergencies. The Canadian Trucking Alliance came out in support of the move.

Some of the convoy’s most visible leaders aren’t even truckers. And at the demonstrations, Confederate flags and pro-Trump signs have mingled alongside the Canadian maple leaf emblem. Money has also poured in from donors in the United States.

James Bauder is one prominent figure and leader of the fringe group Canada Unity, which is well known for peddling conspiracy theories. Action4Canada, which sent vehicles and members to join the convoy, also promotes on its website the unfounded claim that Bill Gates wants to use the vaccine to implant microchips in humans.

“They are using our name in the wrong place and the wrong time,” said Ajay Singh Toor, spokesman for Canada’s West Coast Trucking Association. “It’s not a trucker convoy anymore.”

As a result, the convoy’s demands run the gamut from the removal of all public health measures to Trudeau’s ouster. Teamsters Canada, a union that represents 15,000 long-haul truck drivers, called the convoy a “despicable display of hate lead by the political Right and shamefully encouraged by elected conservative politicians.”

The movement “does not reflect the values of Teamsters Canada, nor the vast majority of our members, and in fact has served to delegitimize the real concerns of most truck drivers today,” the union said in a statement last week.

Issues such as wage theft, bad roads and a lack of restrooms are far more pressing issues for most truckers than vaccine mandates, trucking associations say. But convoy protesters haven’t raised them.

Manbir Bharj drives a crane truck in Ontario and says that the vaccine mandates imposed by the U.S. and Canadian governments on truckers were “fair” because they helped mitigate the spread of the virus.

“This is why the virus is spreading and mutating into different variants — because people don’t know how to follow” rules, Bharj said.

Some worry that the damage to the industry may be hard to reverse. The convoy threatens to exacerbate a labor shortage that already plagued Canadian trucking before the coronavirus hit, Gupta said. About 23,000 truck driver jobs need to be filled, according to a January report by Trucking HR Canada.

“These protests, these blockages, they’re not creating a positive workplace for anybody who wants to embrace trucking,” Gupta said.

Matthew Marchand is a tanker-trailer driver from Ottawa who transports liquid bulk chemicals between Canada and the United States. He is vaccinated but wasn’t fully supportive of the mandate, which he said didn’t really give truckers a “true choice.”

“But how [the protesters] are going about it, to me, is not acceptable,” he said. “The negative reputation that they’ve created for us isn’t going to do us any favors with the public’s perception of our industry. We already have a hard enough time as it is.”

Driver Ted McNeill told CityNews Toronto last week that he had to take a five-hour detour to deliver a truckload of food into Canada.

He had a similar message for the protesting truckers: “Stop it. You’re making us look bad.”

Canada eyeing ‘no-go’ zones in Ottawa to quell ‘Freedom Convoy’ protests, official says

Washington Post, Ellen Francis and Andrew Jeong, 16 February 2022

Canadian authorities say never-before-used emergency powers will now allow them to establish “no-go” zones in the capital, Ottawa, where protesters against pandemic restrictions from the self-styled “Freedom Convoy” remained defiant in the face of a tightening crackdown.

Soon after Prime Minister Justin Trudeau invoked the Emergencies Act, officials said they made progress in dispersing protests that disrupted cross-border trade. The blockades at U.S.-Canada border crossings were down to their last holdouts, with supply routes almost clear as police arrested dozens of people — charging a few with conspiracy to commit murder after announcing the seizure of weapons at one location.

Public Safety Minister Marco Mendicino said the new measures, outlined Tuesday, would allow law enforcement to quell unrest in Ottawa’s downtown, where the protests against pandemic restrictions — which have also focused on Trudeau’s administration — have upended daily life.

The actions could include declaring “certain zones that are adjacent to critical infrastructure like borders, like our national symbols including legislatures, like war monuments ... as a no go zone,” the minister said at a news conference. The emergency declaration helps resolve questions about the authority to take such steps, he added, though it has been criticized as a threat to civil liberties.

Big rigs and other vehicles still jammed major thoroughfares in the city, with protesters buzzing around Parliament after the Emergencies Act, passed in 1988, was invoked in response to a crisis that has rippled across the country. In Ottawa, which has seen monuments such as the National War Memorial defaced, police said they made 18 arrests, launched dozens of investigations and issued more than 3,000 tickets.

Ottawa’s acting deputy police chief, Trish Ferguson, said the number of protesters downtown had fallen below 150, with fewer vehicles clogging the streets. Ferguson said police were waiting “for official details before operationalizing” the Emergencies Act.

The comments came after Ottawa Police Chief Peter Sloly resigned Tuesday over backlash to what was seen as a lax response from authorities to the demonstrations now in their third week.

Canadian officials said they cleared more crossings on the border with the United States after reopening the Ambassador Bridge, the busiest land crossing and a key trade artery connecting Windsor, Ontario, to Detroit.

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police in Alberta said four men were charged with conspiracy to commit murder near the Coutts border crossing, which they said was clear, with traffic "moving slowly." Another crossing in British Columbia was also announced as open, while authorities in Manitoba said they had reached a "resolution" with demonstrators cutting off the Emerson crossing and expected them to clear out Wednesday.

In Alberta, as a line of trucks left the blockade, plastered with Canadian flags and signs reading "END ALL MANDATES," some protesters told local media they packed up because news of the weapons discovery conflicted with their message. "It's too bad that we have to leave, but everybody did really their best," protester Martina Van Hierden told Canada's Global TV.

Under rules the government published Tuesday, authorities said they can ban public assemblies that "may reasonably be expected to lead to a breach of the peace" and "designate and secure protected places, including critical infrastructure," which includes trade corridors and international border crossings.

The measures also allow officials to remove vehicles, equipment or structures that are part of a blockade "anywhere in Canada" and grant the power to "require any crowdfunding platform and payment processor" to report transactions to financial authorities.

Opinion: Justin Trudeau's move to end the trucker protest was risky but correct

Washington Post, Editorial Board, 15 February 2022

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is justified in invoking an emergency law enabling enhanced government powers to end the protest that has paralyzed the capital city of Ottawa, savaged public order and inflicted significant damage on the world's 10th-largest economy.

The prime minister's unprecedented decision to use the Emergencies Act is also risky, as Mr. Trudeau clearly understands. Some of the protesters, whose ranks include an array of extremists, have signaled through intimidation, threats and aggressive conduct that they do not intend to leave Ottawa without a fight.

Mr. Trudeau will have to tread carefully to avoid giving them one. He has already wisely ruled out deploying the military to unclog the city's streets, which have been paralyzed since late January with tractor-trailers, blaring their horns and rumbling on diesel fuel. Nonetheless, among other expanded powers, the emergency law grants his government the right to compel towing companies to remove the trucks, which some had said they were reluctant to do. The potential for violence is real.

Perhaps as useful as tow trucks, or more so, Canadian officials also say they will use the law to freeze corporate and individual bank accounts; suspend vehicle insurance; and crack down on crowdfunding and cryptocurrency sites, which have enabled the protesters to raise more than \$10 million in barely three weeks, a chunk of it from donors in the United States.

The protest, which has broadened into a tantrum against the Trudeau government generally, has reached a stage where it has moved beyond a legitimate expression of political opinion and dissent. By illegally occupying streets in downtown Ottawa, it has upended daily life in a city of 1 million people. It has broadened to menace supply chains by closing bridges carrying traffic to and from the United States, including, for nearly a week, a crossing near Detroit vital to the auto industry. In language by turns unhinged and menacing, it has demanded the removal or overthrow of Mr. Trudeau, who was just reelected to a third term in September.

That the protesters enjoy bellowing the word “liberty” does not negate the fact that their demands are blatantly antidemocratic and anti-constitutional. What they really favor is “liberty” from democratic norms.

Nor do the protesters represent a broad-based social movement. While many in their ranks are peaceable, the leadership includes extremists and white nationalists who have railed against immigrants, trafficked in misinformation and conspiracy theories, and brandished Confederate flags. According to a poll released Monday, 3 in 4 Canadians are fed up and want an end to the protest, which was launched in anger over a government move to broaden already tough pandemic measures. The most prominent Canadian politician to give the protesters wholehearted support is Maxime Bernier, leader of a far-right party.

Fundamentally, the protesters are engaged in a resolute effort to play havoc with the strictures of civilized society because they are disgruntled with the actions of a fairly elected government. The government is right to proceed with caution to restore order.

Behind the Fractious Collaboration Steering the Canada Protests

New York Times, Sarah Maslin Nir and Natalie Kitroeff, 15 February 2022

Since the big rigs entrenched in the core of Canada’s capital first pulled in nearly three weeks ago, they have arranged themselves in a semblance of order, parking in evenly spaced rows. Their drivers have stayed warm and are fed by a corps of marshaled volunteers, and though they have varying personal beliefs, they appear carefully on-message: “Freedom!” has been the repeated refrain for the past 19 days.

It is no accident: High above the clot of trucks on Ottawa’s Parliament Hill, in hotel rooms just out of the fray, are the war rooms behind the operation. From them, a team of self-appointed leaders, some with military and right-wing organizing backgrounds, have orchestrated a disciplined and highly coordinated occupation.

They have spent the weeks huddling in conference rooms and streaming their own news conferences on social media platforms from hotel lobbies. It is a crew that includes former law enforcement officers, military veterans and conservative organizers, a sometimes fractious collaboration that has nonetheless helped to coalesce a demonstration against vaccine mandates into a force that has destabilized the city and sent shock waves throughout Canada.

And while the main blockade that had crippled trade and stalled commercial traffic for nearly a week at the main border crossing between Canada and the United States reopened this week, the protesters in Ottawa largely haven’t budged.

Canadian officials, who do not have authority to tell the police how to operate, have become increasingly frustrated with the occupation and see the coordination not as a polished demonstration, but a dangerous threat.

“What is driving this movement is a very small, organized group that is driven by an ideology to overthrow the government,” Marco Mendicino, the public safety minister, said in remarks on Tuesday. “Through whatever means they may wish to use.”

The protesters’ efforts seemed to be rewarded on Tuesday by the resignation of Ottawa’s police chief, who had faced mounting criticism for the tepid response to the demonstrations in the capital since the start of the occupation. As news of the chief’s departure reached the encampment Tuesday, jubilant honking blared through the city.

Peter Sloly, the police chief, resigned a day after Mr. Trudeau took the rare step of declaring a national public order emergency that extended more robust policing measures across the country. His invocation of the Emergencies Act also took aim at both protester fund-raising, which has been deemed a criminal activity, and the demonstrators’ personal and business bank accounts.

The new public order threatens to unravel a group already at pains to project credibility. Its underpinnings — as a hodgepodge of people suffused in counterfactual belief systems, conspiracy theories and barely bridled rage at anything seen as contrary to their mission — frequently erupt through the official veneer.

At a news conference in the Sheraton Ottawa Hotel on Monday, opened to media other than solely conservative-leaning news outlets for one of the first times, there was an air of gravitas in a room that echoed with the constant coughing of dozens of maskless supporters.

“Some of you might oppose our grievances,” Tamara Lich, one of the most visible group leaders, said to the television cameras. “However, democratic society will always have non-trivial disagreements, and righteous dissidents.”

But when a television reporter, Glen McGregor, asked about a large cache of weapons found that day at a protest in Alberta, others in the conference room became enraged, shoving the reporter and calling for his ejection with yells of “how dare you!” as Mr. McGregor and his television crew fled into the street. Tom Marazzo, a spokesman, later defended the action.

What messaging discipline exists comes from the early public face of the effort, Ms. Lich, said Jay Hill, the interim leader of the Maverick Party, a small right-of-center group based out of Calgary, Alberta, created to promote the separation of Canada’s three western Prairie Provinces from the rest of the country. Ms. Lich has deep ties to the group.

Even before the convoy assembled, its messaging was Ms. Lich’s preoccupation, according to Mr. Hill, who said she called him several times even before arriving in Ottawa to strategize.

“We had a number of discussions about staying on message, about the need in this modern-day world of politics to have a very clearly defined message that is understandable and simple, a message that people can grasp hold of and run with,” he said. “Tamara clearly understands that.”

Ms. Lich played a leading role in organizing a GoFundMe campaign for the protests that raised \$7.8 million before the crowdfunding site shut it down after receiving “police reports of violence and other unlawful activity,” GoFundMe said.

Previously, Ms. Lich worked as a personal trainer in Medicine Hat, Alberta, a town once dubbed “Hell’s Basement,” by Rudyard Kipling for its location on top of huge natural gas field.

Zach Smithson, an employee at Body Building Depot Fitness Emporium, where Ms. Lich used to work, said she has since become the talk of the town.

“I think we are all very proud of her,” he said.

Ms. Lich did not respond to a call and text message requesting an interview.

B.J. Dichter, an official spokesman for the convoy, said he joined the effort after Ms. Lich sought help managing the swell of donations flowing into a GoFundMe page. Mr. Dichter has a history of spouting anti-Islamist views and once said that “political Islam” is “rotting away at our society like syphilis.” He has rejected claims of racism.

“I’m Jewish,” he told the journalist Rupa Subramanya. “I have family in mass graves in Europe. And apparently I’m a white supremacist.”

‘Freedom Convoy’ Protesters in Canada’s Capital City Dig In After Tougher Measures

Wall Street Journal, Paul Vieira and Kim Mackrael, 15 February 2022

The Canadian government on Tuesday defended its decision to invoke unusual emergency powers to quell protests that have paralyzed the capital for 19 days, with the country’s top security official calling a small group behind the current demonstrations a serious threat.

"There have been those who have tried to characterize these illegal blockades [as being] about vaccines and mandates and fatigue with the pandemic. That is not what is driving this movement right now," Marco Mendicino, Canada's Public Safety Minister, said at a news conference Tuesday.

"What is driving this movement is a very small, organized group that is driven by an ideology to overthrow the government through whatever means they may wish to use," he said.

A spokesman for Mr. Mendicino declined to comment.

At the news conference, Mr. Mendicino noted that police in Alberta seized this week a cache of firearms, including handguns and 13 long guns, and a large quantity of ammunition in an early-morning raid targeting three trailers that were part of a blockade disrupting cross-border traffic between Coutts, Alberta, and Montana. Police said they arrested 13 people on Monday in connection with the Coutts border protests.

Mr. Mendicino said the Coutts border crossing was reopened on Tuesday.

In Ottawa, hundreds of heavy trucks and other vehicles continued to clog the streets on Tuesday, the day after Prime Minister Justin Trudeau revealed his intent to invoke emergency measures, which were immediately criticized by some rights groups and provincial leaders as overreach.

Mr. Mendicino's comments led some national security experts to call on the government to provide clarification. "I do think that it behooves the government to explain themselves, to the extent that they can, while maintaining national security," said Leah West, a national security expert at Carleton University in Ottawa.

The official order published Tuesday by the Canadian government lays out the justification for invoking extraordinary measures under the Emergencies Act, and what specific powers it will be using. The order said the government would, among other things, ban protests that police believe would lead to unlawful activity, prohibit gatherings near critical infrastructure such as border crossings, and allow authorities to commandeer tow trucks to help police remove demonstrators' vehicles.

The order said the protests in downtown Ottawa and at border crossings constitute a public-order emergency because of the threat of violence and unrest, and the disruption caused to the supply-chain network and two-way trade with the U.S.

An organizer for the main Ottawa protest group, which operates under the banner Freedom Convoy 2022, denied any plot to commit political violence.

"All we want is the Covid vaccine mandates removed," Chris Barber said. "There's never been a case for trying to overthrow the government."

The official order also contemplates measures related to financial services, as officials target protesters' source of cash. The order instructs crowdfunding websites and their payment processors to report large, suspicious donations to Canada's main finance-intelligence officials. Also, financial institutions are to inform authorities of any assets belonging to protesters, and in some instances cease providing services such as auto insurance to these individuals.

Tamara Lich, a spokeswoman for the Ottawa protesters, said the government's plan was unlikely to erode demonstrators' resolve. Ms. Lich and other protesters say they won't move until Canada drops all Covid-19 vaccine mandates and related restrictions.

"We will hold the line. There are no threats that will frighten us," Ms. Lich said at a news conference.

Mr. Trudeau's decision to tap emergency powers has triggered opposition from premiers of the Canadian provinces of Quebec, Alberta, and Saskatchewan, among others. However, the premier of Ontario, home to Ottawa and the recent blockade of a bridge that connects the province with the U.S., provided his blessing. "I'll support the federal government and any proposals they have to bring law and order back to our province," said Premier Doug Ford.

On Tuesday afternoon, people holding Canadian flags walked around parked trucks and chatted in small groups. About a block away from Parliament Hill, two concrete barriers were in the middle of the road beside a speaker playing rock music and signs that read "Hold the Line" and "Mandate Freedom."

Johanne Fleury, 58, and her husband Yves Fleury, 59, said they joined protesters in Ottawa on Saturday after driving to the capital city from their home near Grande Prairie, Alberta, because they want an end to vaccine mandates and Covid-related restrictions. They said they didn't want to be arrested, but hadn't made plans to leave after the emergency measures were announced.

"These guys are planning on sticking around, and so will we," said Mr. Fleury, who works in the trucking industry.

Security experts said they didn't expect the protesters in Ottawa to be removed immediately, despite the additional powers announced by the government. Law-enforcement officials "will have to take some time to marshal the necessary resources and figure out how best to move against the protest," said Wesley Wark, a senior fellow with the Center for International Governance Innovation, a think tank in Waterloo, Ontario.

Mr. Wark rejected the notion, raised by civil rights organizations and some lawyers, that the government's plan was too far-reaching for the circumstances. "This is not martial law," he said. "This is a surgical instrument to give police at the local level certain tools."

Aaron Wudrick, director of the domestic policy program at the Macdonald-Laurier Institute, said the prime minister is deploying a "nuclear option" to deal with what is largely a downtown Ottawa problem, namely getting tow trucks to remove vehicles. A senior city of Ottawa official said last week that tow-truck companies on retainer with the municipality have refused to remove the trucks in downtown Ottawa because of worries about losing business once the protest ends.

Mr. Wudrick, a former lawyer, said police in Windsor were successful this past weekend in removing protesters who blocked cross-border traffic on the Ambassador Bridge, which connects Detroit with Windsor, Ontario, without the need for emergency powers. A Canadian court issued an order, at the request of the city of Windsor, granting police permission to remove the protesters, who disrupted U.S.-Canada trade for nearly a week.

"It's more a logistical challenge than a threat to the integrity of the country," Mr. Wudrick said. He added that he is worried that civil liberties will be compromised, especially if tow-truck operators are forced to help police. "It seems to me that compelling individuals against their will to help the government seems like a suspension of civil liberties."